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1908

Stillwater Valley



Pastorals

By
Paul Shibell













EVENING, PAINTER CREEK, WEST, ABOVE STILLWATER

Stillwater Valley Pastorals

Publisher's Note

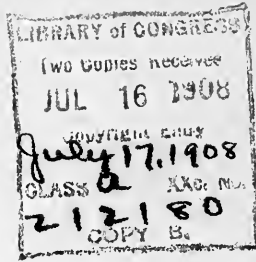
The issuing of these Poems is primarily a labor of love, suggested by the publisher's admiration for them and his friendship with the Poet who composed them. Copies of the book can be had by mail or through book-sellers at fifty cents each. Others like it in form will be brought out from time to time, and four will be bound together in cloth, 200 pp., beautifully illustrated, at \$2.00, post-paid. The photograph is kindly furnished by Mr. Eugene Stratton.

Stillwater Valley Pastorals

By
Paul Shibell



Pleasant Hill, Ohio
J. Logan Rector
1908



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Sarah Iddings Hall

Sacred to the memory of our sweet Aunt Sarah, who was born in this beautiful Stillwater Valley, and who here grew to womanhood and was married to the great-hearted Doctor, Uncle Horatio, of blessed memory. He was her devoted companion through a long and useful Christian life. Their earnest hearts were given humbly to the service of God; at home, in the careful rearing of their children, and in liberally entertaining friends and strangers; in the church, side by side worshiping their Maker they testified to the grace of Jesus Christ, ever seeking to win by timely word and by exemplary discipleship the erring back to the narrow path of rectitude and humility; in politics, as crusaders, they pioneered together in the long unpopular war of righteousness against organized iniquity, heroically withstanding the traffic in intoxicating liquors now held everywhere in contempt, and, praise God, soon to be abolished. They never tired of proving themselves friends of the poor and the unfortunate, but relieved their sufferings and distress with that compassionate simplicity which makes giving a joy and receiving a permanent benefit to the needy. They had no crimes to hide. Their benevolence was modest and sincere. What they did for others was done unto Him who died for all, and who prayed that all men might be one, even as he was one with the Father.

From the time of her happy marriage until last summer she never had seen the old homestead where she played with her gentle brother Joseph, and where her elder brothers, particularly William, my mother's father, instructed her in classical learning. In the holy atmosphere of that home, how naturally were the calm and gracious manners of the strict old-fashioned parents handed down to their children; and how complacently after them did the little mother rule in her own home amid the many demands of modern life, where all was serenity and order, without that painful preciseness so abhorrent to children.

Shortly before her departure to that better home, whither she so confidently kept her hopes, while on her last visit to us, she seemed desirous once again to see the old farmhouse, the wide prospects from the hill where it stands, and the little bedroom of her girlhood. We drove down the valley

to the home place, now occupied by strangers, good, kind, honest people, and for the first time in over fifty years she allowed herself, the last survivor of a noble pioneer family, to look from a new generation back upon those quiet scenes made sacred by precious associations. The view seemed not to make her sad. She had lived many cheerful years in accepted bereavements far above all sentimental sorrow. She seemed, however, satisfied. Perhaps she was rather silent about her thoughts; but whatever the secrets of her heart, they were sacred, and we loved her, and talked of other matters.

This was but a few months ago. Her mortal body is now at rest beside her faithful husband's, and among the graves of children and of neighbors who had preceded her. She had survived her first-born child half a century. She used to tell me how tenderly she loved it still, and how fresh in her memory were all its little ways, and how its voice sometimes spoke to her heart. She told me of beautiful angelic Katie, of Iddings, her manly boy! The waiting is over now. Her sad, sweet mother, crippled from early life, who bore up so many years under bodily pain; her proud-spirited father, always polite and generous; her brothers and sisters, intelligent, poetic souls, her own genial Doctor; her many, many friends—she recognizes them all; and she is theirs forever. Most thrilling to her heart is her Savior, the Heavenly Bridegroom's voice, his welcome as he speaks to her in God's presence of threescore years well spent in humane labors upon earth for him. On her head is the Crown of Life, in her hands the Instrument of Praise. The Light of Heaven hides her from our mortal eyes. But she is the same beautiful Aunt Sarah still, even as when a little maiden she would empty the whisky jugs from which the harvest hands drank, and would fill them with water at the spring. No one thought of blaming her for anything she did: it was all done so gently, and with such deep solicitude for others' welfare.

Meantime, this, too, is God's world, every old familiar field and fence-corner, every kitchen and parlor and bedroom; and we are all and each his well-beloved children. He will continue to care for us and for our beloved; and we, too, will soon go home to him. Be it our consolation, dear hearts who honor the memory of our sweet Aunt Sarah, to live as she lived, and so to be able in our old age to look back upon these happy scenes without regret, and with a pure and trustful heart.

Stillwater

Stillwater, on thy mirror'd banks,
Maiden and youth, my Love and I,
Oft from the old wood's broken ranks
Watch'd o'er the lake the evening sky.
Tranquilly flow'd thy current by,
We scarce could deem it was a river,
Where Heaven, that look'd so still and high,
Seemed deepening in thy depths forever!

Oft, on a mild, sweet Sabbath hour,
We wander'd there, two happy lovers,
Down woodland paths, through fields in flower,
Where bees buzzed round the drooping clovers.
Curtained in green bird-haunted nook,
Beneath an aged sycamore,
We read sweet poems from a book,
And sang beside thy sacred shore.

The sun declined, the landscape blush'd,
And droop'd in its luxuriant beauty;
High overhead the leaves were hushed;
And bells came from the distant city.
Along the gravel clutch'd the roots
Of elms that lean'd out o'er the water,
And swept the lovers who in boats
Oar'd gurgling through their shade with laughter.

Lightly the ripples wash'd the grass;
And lighter, swifter dipt the swallow.
The widening wake would curve and pass,
And sympathetic silence follow;

Till up and down thy golden stream,
In the dark woods and still reflections,
The deepening picture, like a dream,
Grew Eden-old in all directions.

Mysterious feelings, with the night,
Crept o'er us, sitting there together;
The ancient stars grew young and bright:
We seem'd to understand each other.
And when at last we rose to go,
She gave me something for a token;
Long as thy whispering waters flow,
Our promises will ne'er be broken.

Slow since, through unjust penury,
Far from thy scenes we 've toil'd and blundered;
And, praying men might soon be free,
The Truth we 've taught, and seen dishonor'd.
And Oh! may He who loves us all
Come quickly, and abide forever,
That on the human race may fall
The beauty of the woods and river.

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Home

This mild and lengthening winter's day,
Thy hand in mine, fond arm in arm,
We 've walk'd and watch'd our children play
About your old grandfather's farm.
And dearly for thy gentle sake
I love these fields thy feet have press'd;
Oft wish'd that we might here betake,
And from our wanderings find rest.

This rill that babbles at our feet,
Child of the disappearing snow,
Will with its flashing sisters meet,
And join the brook that brawls below.
Birds flit the naked trees among,
Warming them, Love, with dreams of Spring;
Soon life will find a joyous tongue,
And all exultant nature sing.

Stillwater down her valley moves,
Among her ghostly sycamores;
She winds through many leafless groves,
And listens by her quiet shores.
The hills beyond are blue and bright
That bound Miami's wakening vale;
The city, in the pale sunlight,
Smokes and resounds her busy tale.

Of some we speak who are not here;
And some have changed for good or ill.
For all we lift our hearts in prayer;
Though some forget we love them still.
Fair city, thou imperfect Gem,
Imperfect as thy dwellers be,
Oft have we long'd for thee and them,
And here to walk, O God, with Thee!

What prospects from what hills we 've seen!
What joy have felt! what pain relieved.
Yet come we where most poor we 've been,
And oft for slighted love have grieved.
With patience now and fortitude,
Devotion that no ill can shock,
We walk again this ancient wood,
And sit upon this fallen oak.

The noble prospect from this seat
Is like the outlook of our days.
Though we descend, as it is meet,
'T is with more lofty love and praise.
Some seek position, some repose,
Some seek the Father, or a friend,
As the confined and sickly rose
Still upward toward the light will tend.

But we who in that Light do dwell,
And strive therein with human love,
Are ever glad the Truth to tell,
And glad to learn and onward move.
Through poverty that men despise,
And loneliness that many fear,
We reach the quiet of the skies,
And walk with God forever there.

Oh, could I teach my fellowmen
The dignity of simple truth!
As, Father, I believe I can,
Through confident, eternal youth.
Life giveth Life, all words are dead;
Behold, I give myself to all.
Make me Thy sacred wine and bread,
From Heaven Thy living waterfall!

Of a Bumble-Bee

I found a wounded bumble-bee,
 Resplendent in the sun and dew,
Where Morning fills our woods and dells
 With flowers of every hue.
Its form that clung to jewell'd grass
Might pictures and sweet poems surpass.

“Rich dweller of this clovery farm,”
 Quoth I, “what may thy trouble be?
The breeze is light, the hour is warm,
 No grievous wound I see.
My heart is full of love and pleasure,
Gladly I 'd spare a little measure.”

But no, it could not speak nor hear;
 It only buzz'd its useless wings;
So beautiful, so full of fear,
 Like all wild woodland things.
Its honey'd odor and bronze noise
Waked in my soul a thousand joys.

While to a dry weed stalk it clung,
 Which in my hand I sway'd and held,
Through its æolean wings low sung
 The foaming breeze,—then still'd.
Its marvelous pinions had no power
To carry it from flower to flower.

On moss-gray stone I left it then;
 For men must work, like other bees.
Anon I came that way again
 Beneath the leafing trees.
The sun shone warm in that green place;
My bee was gone, and left no trace.

May

Golden, golden, on the green,
Come with me and crown my queen!
Ye shall circle her dark hair.
Rich I 'll bind you in with care,
Mix'd with violets and grasses,
While the noon cloudshadow passes,
Clovers red and white and pink,
Like the tender thoughts we think,
With the pleasant hours inwove,
When we think on those we love.

Yellow, violet and white,
Gather'd for my love's delight.
Now I 'll go and, happy lover!
Crown her with my wreath of clover,
Pick'd in fields where cows and sheep
Crop the flowers in shadows deep.
If she meets me at the gate,
Full of fun, my modest mate,
She will yield her lips provoking
To her swain, if no one 's looking.

Happy, happy night and day,
With our babes we romp and play,
In the house and round the table,
At the barn and in the stable;
Working, laughing, reading books,
Wandering by the waterbrooks,
Joyous praises all day long
Bubbling from our hearts in song;
Noble thoughts in deeds express'd,
Pensive peace and quiet rest.

Seedtime

We harrow'd the sandy bottom lands,
The horses and I, with the harrow's hands;
With the harrow's fingers we finger'd it over,
And claw'd it up, and dragg'd it down,
To sow a field of grass and clover,
Far from the city, in sight of the town;
In sight of the quiet country village,
Near the pasture lowland that smelleth sweet.
With open bosom and naked feet
I follow'd the harrow and waded the tillage,
Back and forth, back and forth,
Gee-ing south, and gee-ing north,
With now a pause and welcome rest
For enraptured poet and patient beast.

A lark mounts up where the rosebrier bends,
And over the meadow rising and falling,
A voice out of the distance calling,
Into a neighboring farm descends.
There on her nest he findeth his mate;
And mine will be in the lane at the gate;
The little ones on the team will ride,
And I 'll go home with them by her side.

Wood Violets

When from hot fields the violets fade,
To the cool thicket I repair;
Pale, bosom'd in its quiet shade,
I find them blooming freshly there.
And oh, to me all flowers are fair!
Each insect in the tangled grass,
And every bough that waves in air
Delights me with its wondrousness.

June

At sunrise, while I bathed myself, I sang!
Whistled and sang! that joyous was my soul.
Round our green valley home vocals, loud-warbling,
Kept musical the groves that grow and wave
All summer their noble branches to and fro
Above the running waters. Pastoral scenes!
From which I reap no ill, which everywhere
Greet me like children in whose merry midst
I dwell forever welcome, how at dawn,
When I awake, ye thrill me with delight!
Warm summer winds, familiar old playmates!
What natural sights and sounds, what breath of flowers,
What wholesome odors from the woods and fields
Ye waft against my body as I bathe,
Coaxing me come and play! Clear bubbling springs,
Eager to wet the meadows, gurgle ever
Over your pebbly beds and mossy falls,
Carrying dew all night for graceful grasses,
Cool drink all day for cattle! Boy, barefoot,
Whistling, I forth did step with lightest heart,
A bright tin pail in either hand, and love
For every life, to milk my cows at dawn.
Dew sparkled on green groundbine blue with bloom,
Geranium-leaved and scented; calamus,
Mid odorous mints, where all day long the bees
Worry the gentle clovers with deep kisses;
And simples of all families, rich florals,
Blended their perfumes with the mists of night
Delaying in the valley. As I waded,
Each prospect, each dear scene as I look'd back,
With all their many hues to perfect forms
Harmoniously wedded, waked in me
Hopes confident and pure, that I, a child,
A happy child, might settle here and grow
And serve my Maker, His contented bard,

Not wishing fame, nor from these quiet scenes
Desiring, as I sometimes do, to hasten
On far endeavors bent in distant lands,
Whereto I was not born. Safer are call'd
To be Christ's far-dispersed messengers,
More equally-proportioned than I,
Though willing, ever proved myself to be.
Here I 'll bear witness to that Love I feel,
Walking with Him at home in pastures green,
Beside Stillwater, in this pleasant valley.
Yet would I go, God knows my heart is true;
Yet would I go as gladly as I stay.

Slow, lovingly by limpid streams I linger'd,
Throbbing with simple pleasure, loath to leave
Each mirror'd scene, each petal'd constellation,
Or weed, or grass, yet eagerly the next
Seeking, and for delicious hues alert,
Or heavenly form transcendent, till I came,
By the brook's windings led, through thickets yonder
Where cattle grazed. There a green-legged heron
Squawk'd awkward larum, with long dangling legs
Flapp'd through the willows toward the river bottoms,
And disappear'd in rushes, vine-festoons
And overhanging leaves! Minnows are there.
There buzzards, wheeling high in air like eagles,
Soar round and round and out of sight all day,
Roosting at night in those tall sycamores
That screen Stillwater.

Soon white and singing streams
At pressure forth from full warm udders gush'd
Fast in my foaming pails, while patient stood,
Chewing the cud, our mild-eyed ministers,
Or switch'd, or kick'd at flies, endangering
The milk and hindering the happy milker,

Who with a thousand senses, so it seem'd,
Felt every blade of grass, each drop of dew,
And drank the rich aroma from the milk,
And even loved those poor dumb cows themselves.

Thus had I finish'd my belated task,
And picking up my pails had started off
Homeward, to strain the milk in cool springhouse,
When, waking from deep thought, I paused, and look'd,
And there in shade where woodland violets linger'd
A little calf I spied, not two hours old,
Lying among the flowers like a fawn;
And not far off, still, as to hide herself,
The anxious mother cow instinctively
Stood waiting till I pass'd. In a safe shadow
Setting my pails, I stopp'd a while to see.
Then home, I strain'd the milk into clean crocks,
Set it in water, and our Mamma dear
Came with the little boy and girly down
To see the calfe-cow. Now I confess,
If there is anything I most enjoy,
And I enjoy most everything that 's good,
'Tis the companionship of little children,
When I can show them something wonderful,
Or follow them, and be a child with them.
And what more entertaining, what more fun
To children's happy hearts than calves and colts,
And little pigs, and lambs, and pups, and mice,
And every nursling in whose helplessness
They take such innocent delight, not knowing
As we do, any thought of the real care
Which is so apt to mar the joy we feel.

Ardie, our stalwart hand, was plowing corn
Up yon hill field near by, and happening down
To drink there at the spring, seem'd not less pleased.

He in his strong arms bore the limberlegs
Across the brook and stood it by its dam
To see if it would suck. It wobbled round,
Half blind, on its unsteady props, but soon
Bumping the place, took hold, and wagg'd its tail,
Hunching, though there was plenty and to spare;
And every time it hunch'd it lost its hold,
And stagger'd round, hunting, much to the delight
Of the children! So when we all had seen, and all
Had laugh'd again, and I the gentle cow
Had carefully relieved, and once, once more
The calf was stroked and petted by the children,
We left it in the shade there with its mother,
Lying beside the brook in the deep grass.

Covington Farms

Fair fields of Covington,
By deep Stillwater's side,
This day I first beheld the sun
Stream o'er your landscapes wide.

Contented lay the peaceful farms,
From lingering forests won;
For praise of thee my bosom warms,
Fair fields of Covington!

To-day I saw where Annie dwelt,
Sweet Annie whom I knew,
When she, a farmer's blushing bride,
Came here to dwell with you.

Both womanly and fair she was,
Both strong and fair to see,
And here, among these happy scenes,
Well might her homestead be.

Her children run about the place,
They play beside the door,
But I did not see the friendly face,
And will hear her voice no more.

It seem'd her gentle soul was form'd
For a peaceful life like this;
But happier is her present state,
Where every breath is bliss.

May holiest companionships,
As God Himself, I pray,
Be kind to all whom Annie loved,
And bless them on their way.

That she whose constancy they knew
May lure their steps toward Heaven,
A guardian angel wise and true,
In tenderest foresight given.

On Finding a White Thistle Blossom

As if a white-soul'd acorn burst in bloom,
Or fay's pineapple from its prickly tomb
Sent forth a spray-like flower of bright foam!

I never saw a thistle white as snow;
But God is able thus to make it grow;
And we of God learn everything we know.

Thanks to the Father Who instructs His child
With leaves and flowers that He makes grow wild
In native elegance and beauty mild.

Praise Him for Knowledge, and such ignorance, too;
For Earth, where each day we learn something new;
Praise Him for this white thistle that here grew.

To a Morning Glory

Frail splendor, of most blue, most delicate tissue,
O vine-born lily by this crystal spring!
Bright oreole, or violet-blooded moon-blossom,
What words can match thy beauty, or contain,
Though in themselves most pure, thy gentle grace?
When maidens with their lovers hand in hand,
Conversing pleasantly beneath the stars,
Beguile these summer nights, they, flowers themselves,
On their warm constant bosoms blooms may wear
Less worthy such high honor than thou whose life,
Like Effie's, brief as pure, will with the morn
Have perish'd. Thee I dream'd last showery sunset
My spiral shell, toy of the flying spray,
Here toss'd wave-tinted on the strand, to ope
A blue sea-flower, that could not, dungeoned
In watery cloisters of enchanted deep,
Unbosom her chaste thoughts wherewith she now
Surprises the attentive silences
Of nature. These, my green wet caves, did glitter
As if in bloom with raindrops; and the stars
Caused them to sparkle, while the mother Night
Gather'd the mists and hung them tenderly
In myriad globes of water on the grass,
Till all the hills and woods and valleys waked
And shone, as though a world of dazzling gems
Were island in a sea of light. Then all
Went slowly up dissolved in mist, made clouds,
And sail'd away in morning-color'd fleets
Before the breath of Summer; and I turn'd
To thee, sweet glory of the dawn, ere Day
Should fold thee up, a precious womb of seeds,
To bear another Summer other flowers,
Whose likeness to thyself, thou being virgin,

Will perfect be, as theirs to them, and so
Till other Poets come and celebrate
More tenderly thy beauty.

These pearl walls,
That cherish'd thy young soul, and now, star-spread,
Reveal their treasure, through unfolding curves,
Childlike their secret hue did innocently
Suggest; and here each perishable grace,
Whose dear returning charms anticipation
Could not repicture perfectly, are mine.
But Oh! too heavenly thy beauty is,
With all it shadows forth, hither to be,
As There, enjoy'd. My Master, in those years
Of mortal life which to mankind (Himself
The Lily of our yearnings after God)
He gave, taught first what every lily-flower
Might teach, did men but wonder what they taught,
Did they but love the Hand That fashion'd them,
Whose mercies with the flowers and birds they share.
And when all men are willing to become
Incarnate Beauty, when the little child
Remains through life a little child, what seraphs,
Though wiser, could be happier than we?
From my love's vine-clad cottage down this path,
Which winds among the trees and through the morning,
Our girlie girl, thirsting to sip, might pause,
And with meek adoration worship Him
Whose glorious veil ye are. Yesterday noon
Thee watching, and thy sisters, Oh! white-center'd
And various in color, by each blush
Guess'd I their unborn loveliness and thine;
While every drooped leaf and folded flower
Hung wet with clinging pearls. Rain fine as spray
On grasses pendulant, and in the air
A freshness, told the tale the flowers have told

Perennially for ages. But till Life
Burst Death, or not a child in all the world
Must weep for man's injustice,—till God's Day—
My thirst thou canst not quench, true Holy Grail,
Goblet of liquid Summer, tilted and dripping,
Of all Pan's flowery feast the crowning cup!

All that is good confirmeth what is best.
Somewhat, fair lily, I have learn'd of thee,
Thee and my own divine intelligence:
Life will be beautiful when I am gone;
And Where I go Life will be Beautiful.
Who knows not this? for every rose proclaims it:
And every bird and leaf and star proclaims it
A thousand times thrice blessed will it seem
To know all men are happy. But meanwhile
I will be made as happy as on Earth
A Poet, seeing so much woe, may be.

What intuitions of Celestial Music
Haunt this clear well! Angels assemble, robed
In colors like the delicatest blossoms,
And in their long and noble Silences
Attune to thee their sacred instruments,
That unto God they might more strictly hymn
Their heart-warm praises. For each perfect flower
Doth seem to me the note whereto all Life
Must key itself, to be in harmony
With God, Who made them after His Own Joy,
To be His representatives and lift,
With floral music, all our aspirations
Unto Himself. Unconsciously, earthchild,
Thy life resembleth man's: from dread decay,
By process hidden, to reach the light, and there
To never-cloying melodies unfold,
Fresh as when first in God's Conception clear

Ye bloom'd, and with the rose in Paradise
Sprang up untended, brightening since then
How many a cottage dooryard! Happy flowers!
I would be as ye seem, or yon blue sky,
Or like these tinkling ripples wild I 'd be,
Yet would not from mankind take apart
My solitary liberation soft,
But sternly, for man's full deliverance,
In dauntless fellowship, with hand and heart
I love and toil, helping to teach men grow
Relentless in their native honesty.

O sweet companionable morning glory!
Oft dream I of blest friends, the Ocean Sea,
Children and Poets who have journey'd wondering,
And never, never may return to walk
Beside Earth's Waters with me. Yet this breeze
Brings morning freshness many a mile to me,
And fans my homesick cheeks, Love-sent from Heaven,
Whence thou dost seem. And such vast rolling clouds!
I know not where o'er my beloved Deep
I e'er shall watch with transport like a child
Clouds more sublimely fair! Only yestereen
These groves were fountains, and rainbow and clouds,
Gloriously shadow'd, through earth's rosy mists,
Like snowy mountains changing to pure gold,
Rear'd their magnificent scenery so high
That the blue sky seem'd bluer than the sea,
And infinitely deep and tender seem'd.
Long time I stood and watch'd them, scarce embodied,
Such rapture did my mind experience!
In Nature's visible ascension grand,
Material instance of the silent, slow,
Divine unfolding process of All Things,
Upwell'd before my soul God's Self-disclosure,
Life's everlasting Apotheosis,

Beauty, Love's outward semblance, tangible Soul,
Veiling the Secret of the Universe:
Evolved, evolving still, still to evolve,
Perpetual progress through Eternal Time.
And Oh! I thought thus must the soul of man
Conceive its Maker and give birth to God.
The spirit wakes refresh'd and forth must fare
New senses to unfold. The horizon still
Recedes. All things must change and pass. But man,
Beginningless and endless, for whose growth
All things subsist,—O man, thou restless heaven!
Is it not worth all pains to ponder here
Our daily lesson, and herein find hidden
The still-evasive Mystery?

Long I stood
And watch'd them lay aside their golden garments,
Receding dignity! divine portent!
Looming all still out of my life, to come,
As now to other eyes, forever changing,
Yet like the twinkling stars, changeless forever.
Their very fading thrill'd me. When from sight
Behind the rolling world like sailing ships
They hid themselves in darkness, and the night
Gather'd around me, Memory and Hope
Awed my full heart with gratitude that I,
Some day set free from mine unworthiness,
Would be thus on my Journey Infinite,
Whither Earth's visions beckon with their beauty
Our clear-eyed Consciousness as heirs of All.

In sleep the blessedness of having glimpsed
What waits the watchful spirit in bright Realms
Beyond our ken, like those remember'd clouds,
Faded into forgetfulness and rest.
But ere I pass'd into that final state

Of sweet oblivious repose, I dream'd.
Heav'd all about me great green swellful billows,
That under violet skies the wild sea gull
Follows on curling wing; while far o'er the blue,
In slow procession with the summer clouds,
White ships in shadow toward fair havens lean,
Through sunbeams pass before those splendid fogs
That roll along like chariots bearing
To concourse mighty Spirits, follow'd, heralded,
On where with gold and purple shadows kindle,
Until they fade, and twilight o'er the deep
Becomes darkness wide. Then the clear stars
Take up their sparkling through the night; the sand,
Left wet far up by the receding tide,
Glimmers; and on its mirror lovers are walking,
Between two Heavens fill'd with shining stars,
Listening to the sounding of the sea.
Though all was but a fair far-inland dream,
Like many a waking daydream to my soul
It spake of what shall be by what hath been.

Thee, frail, I love not less. Thou art to me
A never tiresome symbol, ever new,
Of heavenly perfection, here attain'd
Through no display of intellectual strength,
Nor grandeur, as of elements at war
With elements. Ambition hath no place
In God's most holy Presence. Babes and mothers,
And among men ingenuous affection,
These, and not public prayers, are to our Father
Acceptable, and thou inspirest these.
Each lucent snow-white texture, each blue vein
That from thy throat outcurveth into all
This flood of color, hath its beauteous use,
Argent stamens and pistil, a thrilling scene!
With graceful pleasure wondrously express'd,

Though fragile. And thy calm inverted image,
Pale watery image, tenderly enshrined
Among thy heart-shaped leaves,—how still-urn-like
Within this pool thou skyward pourest out
Thy loveliness, as if yon drowned clouds
Fill'd not from ether their vast billowy caverns,
But from thy chalice, child of the sweet skies.
Were there mermaidens in the waterworld,
White-throated bell with snowy pendulums,
How might they glide with solemn motion hither,
And hearken to thy deep delicious purple,
Chiming to morning worship in the grove
Naiads and nymphs and satyrs crown'd with flowers.

Early this morn, returning from the pasture,
With full pails of warm milk, did I not spy,
—Or was it fancy?—standing here in the dusk,
A water sprite in misty draperies,
Her unbound hair streaming about her shoulders,
Gazing at thee, as if she wish'd with pain
That she were half so beautiful? But so,
When Eve in Eden first beheld thee blooming,
She call'd thee loveliest lily of the Garden.
Herself, draped in the mists of maiden love,
And shower'd about with kisses of glad welcome,
She had not been seen, and could not know how fair:
Though she in brooks her wavering image held,
As Dian bright uplifts her silver face
Above the flood, and drives her slender hounds
Afield, yet knows not how divine she seems!
And so methought my nymph stood, her fair hands
Across her virgin breast, not seeing me,
And lifting her sweet face as to be kiss'd,
Her parted lips unto thy purple rim
Touch'd lightly, as if quaffing jovial nectar.
Entranced, I watch'd her changing, till the east

Her graceful form did slowly disenchant,
And she became that fog which night by night
Broods o'er this hallow'd spring, but from the sun
Slowly and almost imperceptibly
Doth vanish, like my dream.

But now farewell.

Day wideneth. Thy death, by shades postponed,
Can be postponed no longer. The sun's warmth
Extendeth into shadows, and thy moments
Are number'd. And how brief thy life hath been.
Last night an angel's locket, pearl-inlaid,
Dropt down from Heaven, a token of love to me;
Now to the morn in all thy passionate blue,
Soft-fluted with birth-folds, a breathing flower
Thou art, O my beloved Queen of Flowers!
Of all Love's royal thoughts their purple queen.
Not that I think God cherishes one life
Less than another, but that He ordain'd
Rich differences, wherein we find pastime
According to His Mind, and as we watch
Are able to distinguish laws and systems,
And more in thought resemble our Creator,
Who made them, both for our instruction here,
And for some secret infinite Design
From whose variety and confidence
They spring. And loving him, how can I, dear,
But love thee? Not alone for thy chaste spirit,
Fairest, through whose transparent temple walls
The cheerful sunlight, welling, overfloweth
In purple joy! but that thou yieldest back
Thy beauty whence it came. I, too, must go,
Whither no man can tell me, nor how soon,
Back to my Father's House to dwell with Him.
Whatever of His Goodness I receive
Augments my joy, and will be born Elsewhere,

An individual Spirit, hither known
No more, There to develop and ascend,
With Gertrude and our love-crown'd little ones,
Dear friends of old, and of the New Creation,
And from the Stars, innumerable Host!—
Who knows how many bright, unbounded Ages?
And with what growth of clear Intelligence?
What never-ending Wonder? What Delight?
For here each day are we not born again?
And yet again? Who but hath left some sin
Behind his back forever? Yet who standeth
Thence capable and finally approved
In God's pure sight? Though there live honest men,
Men can be more than men dream. Each rare moment
To loving labor given I feel my hopes
Drawn upward, and my confidence in God
And in all human life strengthen'd. What thoughts
Higher than these may in just years light up
The darkness of mortality and lift
Men's conversation Heavenward, God knoweth.
Prophets who teach men freedom cannot guess
To what high use the people will apply
Their liberties, once they have been achieved.
Neither the future nor the past belongs
In any sense to any man; nor Earth,
Nor smallest part thereof; but man himself
God's child, and all that God to him hath given
Belongs to God, and cannot be employ'd
To thwart His deep foreknowledge, nor destroy
One creature, nor undo what hath been done.
Keep sweet from struggle, O my soul! The stars,
Visible here, are yet more beautiful,
Where, from the altitudes of Heaven, pure angels
Behold them.

So be thou, my darling Dream,
My slowly dying Splendor, so to me
Be thou, that I, thy Lover, and thy Poet,
May high Conceptions have of that Bourne whither
In dreams I 'll think thee gone. There what true Friends
Await me! What Divinities attend me!
I am so glad the years have kept me still
The simple child I was: have brought me back,
Whenever I have wander'd, to a state
Of asking innocence and wondering faith.

And now I know the time to bid good-by
Is almost here, and I must give thee up;
Must look to God for similar delights
Elsewhere, as bees their daily honey gather,
Not from one flower only, but from many,
And from all kinds. Would I could keep in mind,
When thou art gone, the happiness I feel.
But then I fear I should have miss'd even thee,
So full my heart, so tired my mind had been,
So many flowers, and all flowers so fair.
The world is full of interest, but pleasures
Fade with the passing moments, and are gone.
Who can extend one joy beyond its hour,
Or keep one posey fragrant without God?
I did not hope to imprison in characters
So lovely a creation, and therefore
I have not fail'd. I only feel bereaved.
This life, so transitory, breaks my heart.
Indeed, my heart was sadden'd in the womb;
And only spiritual aspirations,
And loving hands, and tenderest of care,
Have brought me to this hour, and now I know
Will not forsake me, but will bear me up,
And on, I know not wherefore, but shall know.
As thou, being sweet, sweetenest my toil,

So I will nobler live, remembering thee,
Who wast not studious to please, yet pleased me,
Because thy life is as I would mine were:
Perfectly pure, serenely beautiful,
In full and free and grand accord with Life.

Thy sunborn hummingbird hath flash'd away home;
From flower to flower the black plush bumble-bee,
Girding his yellow loins, hath plied his trade
And left thee, as he leaves them all; but thou,
Concern'd not for thy wealth, didst for a kiss,
Without complaint, yield all thy treasur'd dew.

How at the scarcest breath of noon thou flutterest
Along thy filmy verge. This living mirror,
Deep, still, seems not so sensitive. Nor moves
Ah, to and fro more gently her slight wings
Yon azured butterfly, where on a clover
She sleeps, changing her blue to gold in the sun,
Unconscious of the joy she gives, than thou,
Thrill'd at each breathing of soft summer air,
Yielding thy purple chalice to be kiss'd
And folded, keepest in continual motion
Round thy white-spiced corolla, Font of Joy,
The curtain that must hide thee soon forever.

Now I must go about my noonday chores.
The horses are in pasture with the cattle;
The sheep are quiet in the orchard shade;
And there is little to do; but I must go.
Fade, I will not forget thee. Nor in Heaven,
Where Morning Glories twine, and all things fair
Have a perpetual beauty here unknown,
Nor in whatever happy state I henceforth
With all my fellows move will I forget
Thy Message of Deliverance, from Him
Who loves me, Whom I love, and soon shall see.

September in the Country

This day of intermittent sun and shower,
And oft when shower and sunlight veil'd the hills,
I saunter'd, whistling cheerfully, and musing,
Along green-shelter'd highways, cool with shadow,
And out in the open country, Dear; there saw
Homes, dovecote-like, in valley and on hillside,
With gardens neat of flowers and vegetables,
Old orchards leaning, the wet leaves and fruit
Gay all in sun. But cheeriest next these
Were little sparrow-birds that high on tips
Of twined beanpoles perch'd in regular rows,
Some chirping; and some stretch'd and dried their wings
And bill'd their feathers carefully, and flutter'd,
As if it were as fair a day for them
As any clear unclouded summer day.

When I faced homeward, thou didst meet me, singing;
As o'er the hills my glad footsteps I bent,
Far here-away, down in the wooded valley
Heard I thy sweet voice, birdlike, calling me,
And almost ran home, though I fain had stayed
To listen; but thine eyes I love to see,
To hold thy hand, beside thee walk, and walking
To hear thy voice. O Love! to worship God
Out in the open air! along the road,
To sing and lift the heart in grateful praise!
How like the happy little birds we feel!
How as a spring our deeply-bubbling bosoms
Well with immeasurable happiness,
Fresh tribute glad to God for all His wide
Benevolence, and for sweet Life itself!

I ask'd how fared our innocent little ones,
Fair opening flowers, meek blossoms of our Love,
Perennial seals to our Fidelity,

Oh, never to be broken! Lambs of God,
That sleep so soundly, peacefully here now
On our fond bosoms, where, before the Lord,
We in our homely sanctuary sit
With our inestimable sacrifice,
Offering pure to Him, not as of old,
But living, more acceptable with the Father,
Who loves us, and before Whose equal eye
All we are simple children.

O Sweetheart!
Here with thee, I am glad as any bird!
Thine amiable character is to me
Justification for continuing
Happy on Earth, who fain would live here, there,
And everywhere, but more than all, in Heaven.
I am not worthy, nor, unglorified,
Can hope to be; but these, Oh, these are worthy!
Fresh images from Heaven of what God
Would have us be at heart! Fair breathing flowers
With petals folded for the night, to ope
Refresh'd at early dawn, to wake us, Love,
With kisses fragrant! Happy nestlings yet,
Wee birds of passage, soon to fly away.
God keep them glad as little lambs at play.

The Blacksmith

Hark, hark, hark, hark, hark, brother!
Hark, hark, hark, hark, hark, sister!
Do you not hear the black, black, black, black, blacksmith
Pound, pound, pound, pound, pounding upon his anvil?
Long, long, long, long, long, long, long may he
Live with his children and
Pound, pound, pound, pound, pound, pound, pound upon
his anvil!

Autumn Reverie

It is the season when wild morning glories
Deck with curved foliage these stubble fields
Where waved the yellow wheat, where shock'd ripe sheaves
In sober beauty stood after full harvest,
A picture of repose and of reward
That comes of patient toil unto a life
Justly obedient to beneficent
And holy laws. Here from this tasseled maize
The slender vines, twining, hold out bright cups
And bind and beautify these peaceful blades
With emblems of good will. The poet farmer
Slays not such weeds, but grants them rightful place,
Ornament of an inheritance historic,
An old Ohio Eden, whose dear past
Is twined about with many a loving heart
Affectionate and simple, plain and true.
Amid varieties of other tones,
Greens and autumnal browns, they meekly trail
Along the bare earth and about old stumps
Their Heaven-suggesting gracefulness, redeeming
With charity alike the outgrown past
And bold, obtrusive present, offspring fair
Of both, and of the ever-enduring sun.

Appropriate your place, ye gentle flowers,
Long years it waited for you and prepared
Through ages of disintegrating rock,
Of glacial torrents, of decaying moss,
Up through the rise and fall of forests dim,
Long time it waited for you: you are come.
This bed of mould is your divine reception.
Here bring forth beauty after your own kind,
Sharing with other plant life and with man
The long-stored-up resources of the West.

These rooted stumps yet show where stood tall, straight,
Majestic trees, that set their trunks and tops
Athwart man's onward march, a hundred years
With lofty echoes mocking the swift ax,
And stroke on stroke retelling! Woods were roll'd
In heaps and burn'd! And still, even in my time,
I well remember, as a little lad,
In Perrin's being lost, where oft I 'd go,
Drawn thither by that strong mysterious tie
Which bound me to the past with all its toil,
Its primitive sacrifices, its deep sorrows,
And best of all, its hopes of a Better Life
Beyond the grave. Oh, the vast shadowy wood!
How quiet was it there, and how content
There did I feel, whose life, both sides, far back,
Was in the conquering of such mighty hosts
Prepared for, while as yet such days as these
Were but a dream, if in those busy years
These days were even dream'd of, as no doubt
They must have been, though not as now they prove,
When their rich heirs can scarce keep pace with Time!

So were the poets, the philosophers,
The statesmen, and the teachers of the future
Arranged for by those mothers in homespun
At spinning-wheel and loom. And round the wide
And roaring fireplace of those pioneers
The prayerful aspirations of a people
Conceived were in toil and mutual care.
Mid straiten'd circumspection, long delay,
Too early marriages, oftentimes too fruitful,
The future was brought forth with fortitude.
Honor and self-sacrifice were instill'd
In the young heart by precept and hard work,
The genuine religion of home life
And common duty, whose foundations rest

Deep in the human consciousness of God
In nature and in all things, but in Christ
Chiefly, and in the Scriptural Revelations
Which testify of Him.

Many of those hard,
Straight hickories, those oak, elm, beech, hack, sugar,
Those gray-ash, with their bark still clinging, lie,
Straight-hewn and heavy, in our big log barn,
Piled upward to the rafters, in rude strength
Dividing mow from mow, and all together
With sapling roof-poles, shingles of split oak,
And heavy oaken floors, tell a plain tale
Of builders rude with whom our boy forefathers
Toil'd in the days of skulking redmen here
Among these rolling hills, to build log houses
And lay foundations for a state. Their cabin
Long gone, the old two-story mansion, gone,
This lone big landmark of the past remains.
Soon it must follow them and give its room
And strong material to more modern structures,
Farm buildings more in keeping with these times,
Less inconvenient, less wasteful of space
And of precious timber; just as those great forests,
Valuable in themselves and for their day,
Now yield their life to maize and morning glories,
To wheatfields and to bluegrass grazing lands,
Where, in the fullness of God's time grew up
Among our native flora these escapes,
Now wild as they. Old herbs medicinal,
Brought hither from the settlements back East,
And from the gardens of far Germany,
Sunflowers, four-o'clocks, all are giving way
To more luxuriant beauties from the tropics,
And to the latest of man's many new
Developments from nature as he finds her.

So we advance. Last June in this old lane
Here bloom'd the sweet briar rose, I thought the fairest
Of all the summer flowers, each most fair.
So fresh and happy was I then it seem'd
My joys must never cease. But long, hot days
In fierce succession wearied. Now recurs
The gentler season of cool summer nights,
And I enjoy weed flowers flaming gayly
By roadside and in pasture fields, where chirp
The crickets in still twilight. Through deep woods
Alone with God I walk, or with dear friends
Who come to see us in our country home,
Or with my laughing children, or at nightfall
With Gertrude, sweet companion of my heart.

Only yesterday afternoon we harness'd
And drove our gentle gray with loving friends
Toward Greenville Falls, there a brief Sabbath hour
To spend in quiet mood. We watch'd the water
That pours so softly down its limestone shelves
Along low cliffs where ferns and flowers hang,
Not in profusion wild and grand, and yet
Because so near our home, a noble scene,
And fraught with sacred memories. The true-hearted
Who from our circle silently we miss'd,
Ah, how we long'd for them! The children romp'd
And gather'd blooms by handfuls, calling us,
And running to our sides that we their posies
Might smell: and every fragrance, every sound
Seem'd not of sadness, but of rest; and love
Unspoken fill'd each bosom, whether gravely
Or with accompanying laughter we conversed.

When through the sunset homeward in our carriage
Contentedly we moved, our voices blended
In thankful hymn, not loudly, till the children
Had fallen asleep, and over the deep woods

The rosy moon, more and more visible,
Hallow'd the silence and grew large and bright
Above Stillwater Valley, lighting up
For miles its peaceful farms and villages
And church towers. Then we dipt below the leaves,
Below the hill, and crost the red iron bridge,
Where the brook murmurs through our farm, turn'd in
The shadowy lane under the weeping willows,
And out again in sight of the full moon.
There at our cottage dooryard tenderly
We carried in the little loves; and I,
When the freed horse was snorting in the pasture,
Here on the hillside in the misty moon
My cattle, by the tinkling of their bells
I found, here milk'd them, while the silvery dew
Sparkled beneath my feet upon the grass;
And through the damp night air crickets kept up
Their old familiar never-varying song;
The stars watch'd, and an old cow now and then
Sigh'd with deep satisfaction; and the trees
Lifted their drooping foliage, and listen'd.

The Golden Summer Clouds

Oft in the golden summer clouds at even
I see new wonders; and my Father speaks,
How gently to His child, of happier scenes,
To which those golden vistas of bright days,
Pure thoughts, and holy aspirations lead.
O may my life be ever in His sight
Just, even as He is just, and to His will
Devoted, that my Heaven be not postponed,
But brighten'd with His presence, till all Earth
Shine as the clouds at sunset, and devoutly
Through Death's last flaming portal into Life,
With filial obedience I go

To meet my Father at the Beautiful Gate.
Not through exalted moments of the mind,
Fixed like a statue on some lonely hill,
But with what sense of welcome born, a strain
Of music, into that sweet intercourse
Where myriads are noble in God's sight,
Nor ever feel propensity again
Thence to debase themselves, but love and blossom
To new advancement in God's workmanship.

Winter Morning

I rise and look out at the window, Love,
And all the stars are shining. While I dress
Lie thou and take thy needful morning sleep,
And I will tiptoe downstairs with the lamp,
And build the kitchen fire, the table set
For breakfast, and our patient creatures greet
With lantern in the stable where they chew
Meekly their fodder. Frosty are the nights,
Wholesome and stinging cold. When the room 's warm,
Or when thou wilt, come down and dress thyself
By jealous lamplight, yellow in the dawn,
Leaving the wee ones to surprise us late,
When from their natural rest, bewilder'd half,
They wake and rub their sleepy eyes, looking
For us. Then they 'll grope down, and smile "Good Morn-
ing,"
And dress before the kitchen fire and eat
Their porridge from their little porringers.
So we 'll begin another busy day,
With thankful hearts, lifting our prayer to Heaven:
That thus may we ever be honest people,
And bring our children up to work and play
Contentedly and in the sight of God.

The Seasons

Winter now hath vanish'd;
Northward far he blows,
Freezing fingers with his breath,
And piling high the snows.
Come, gentle Spring, with all thy flowers,
Come, bind thy poet's brows.

Come, rose-crowned Summer,
Warm from purple seas,
Pregnant buds are swelling
On shrubs and vines and trees.
Come, rose-crowned Summer,
Bring thy happy days.

Summer in her beauty
Seeth Spring advance,
Strewing Earth with dandelions;
Blithe Cupids with her dance,
Grace in every motion,
Love in every glance.

Swallows round them twitter,
Circling through the air,
Orioles and robins call,
Lark and thistelfare;
Eagles, hitch'd with sunbeams,
Draw a golden car.

In the car, on violets,
Lies a sleeping Love:
Round her virgin loveliness,
And in the sky above,
Wrens chirp, and fairies, noiselessly,
On grackle, crane and dove,

Through the air are gliding
Northward with great speed,
Scattering behind them
Morning-glory seed,
Dahlia, aster, goldenrod
And purple ironweed.

For flowers in the Autumn
Are beautiful and bright;
They fill the air with color,
The bosom with delight:
By roadside, in meadow,
Violet and white;

There a flame of scarlet
Near the woods is seen;
Orange, black, and lavender,
'Mid shades of simple green,
Where sunbeams, through grasses,
Weave a twinkling screen.

There, rising, and falling,
And swaying in the breeze,
Little birds, alighting,
Chirp soft melodies;
And butterflies and dragons,
Whom no one ever sees,

Flutter in the sun,
Flutter in the sky,
Flutter, flutter everywhere,
Till in the night they die,
And down among dead weeds
In tangled grasses lie.

The Autumn winds go sighing
Among the forest leaves,

And the rain all night
Drips from the vines in the eaves.
The red leaves are falling,
And the yellow leaves.

Then when Indian Summer
Fadeth, ah, too soon,
On frosty nights all glitter
Under the clear moon,
Or glare in icy mail
To the sun at noon.

Final skill most wondrous,
When the soft snow showers
Fall with feathery crystals
Through the long night hours,
And happy children welcome
The world of white-robed flowers!

Then all praise the Winter,
Season of good cheer,
Liveliest, severest,
Most wholesome of the year.
To them that love each other
Every day is dear.

Toil

Is there no toil in Heaven? Say not so!
No nights like this, with silvery moonbeams
Pouring their flood of rapture on my soul?
As well say, flowers no more, nor any love,
No joyous recognition. Who can shadow
Out of imperfect thought what Scenes Immortal
God of His unimaginable strength
Builds? And with rapturous love, our Father still,
Through changed humanities forever rising,

A nobler Race, and yet a higher Heaven
 Will build? Doth not God toil to make man just?
 To simplify and help him follow stoutly
 His clean intentions? Who but loves to seek
 Daily his children's comfort and instruction?
 Shall mortal man deny that bliss to God
 Which maketh man immortal? Toil is life!
 Be it but provident, the one sure force
 That opes all doors to universal freedom.
 Sane, sober, honest, strong, intelligent toil.
 Who, without toil, hath ever found true rest?
 Who, without toil, hath ever found God great?
 Who are the overcomers, the true conquerors?
 Who heroes? kings? who saints? deliverers?
 Have any without toil been anything,
 Done anything, learn'd anything? Not Christ!
 God rest thy soul: go, give such thinking rest.
 Turn thy industrious blood into main channels
 To any trade, so it be wholesome and useful.
 Toil, body, toil! God toileth; Angels toil!
 Else whence their goodness? Paradise? Thy brain,
 Thy hands, thy spirit here their Eden shall find,
 Here their Sublime Repose, their Judgment Day,
 With many a new outgoing toward a higher,
 A holier Promised Land. Determine Christlike
 To do His will Who made you, and to that
 Give all thy mind, thy strength, thy spirit. Wisdom
 God in that hour will give thee. Not till then.

The Song Sparrow

Sparkle the cold snow crystals
 Where roses wild we found;
 Soft: a sparrow whistles!
 The familiar sound
 Stirs the sleeping flowers
 In the frozen ground.

High in naked elmtops,
Hid by flurries of snow,
Singing, singing, singing,
And rocking to and fro,
Carest not, wee birdie,
Whether March winds blow?

When one heart rejoices
All the earth seems glad!
Little birds their voices,
High above our head,
Though no one seems listening,
Shower forth like mad!

Fortunate the poet
Who like thee can live,
Sing his joys and sorrows,
Be generous and forgive.
Many simple blessings
Thankful hearts receive.

Envoi

When folks out here go anywhere
To see anybody, I declare!
They always say when they start away:
"Well, come and see us and spend the day!"
"Yes, we will, you come again;
You 're always welcome, no matter when!"
That is, you know, if you happen to go
Where you *are* welcome, you soon *feel* so;
Which might be said in such a case
Of any people and every place!
But somehow here they have a knack
Of welcoming and inviting back
With an open hospitality
It always does one good to see!

And now, where'er my book may go,
I hope 't will please its readers so
That a kind welcome thus 't will meet
From hearts that keep the old World sweet!
I trust I may invited be
With a generous hospitality
To come again, to stay be press'd,
And urged to be a frequent guest;
Till I can feel full well aware
That a welcome waits me everywhere;
For a hearty, sincere handgrasp 's worth
More to a poet than all the Earth!
A singer cannot sing his best
Where he feels he is not a welcome guest.

And yet, so well do I think of men
That whether they ask me back again,
Or overlook my little book,
I still will sing in my quiet nook,
Among the rolling Ohio hills,
Down whose valleys ripple the rills!
I still will praise our Father's Love,
Still learn His Wisdom and sing thereof;
Will teach my children of Christ and live
In Him, forgiven as I forgive.
Do flowers bloom to be seen? Does the bird
Sing in yon thicket to be heard?
And shall the poet pine away
Because no listeners attend his lay?

How fortunate all people are,
If they only know it! for not far,
But very near about us all
God's Welcome awaits our knock and call!
The good in every neighborhood
Ever are looking for the Good;
The traveler content will find

Nowhere on Earth but in the Mind;
The laborer in his bosom bears
The Antidote for all his cares;
The poet in his simple theme
Enters the Universal Dream,
Records the beat of God's Great Heart,
And of His Purpose becomes a part.

Then look no farther than at thy feet
Good fortune in this world to meet:
The soul that seeks divine content
Must at the hand of God be spent;
Must go where oft no welcome is,
No friendship oftentimes but His;
Must without thought of recompense
Urge common with uncommon sense;
With Christlike rectitude of mind
Must kindly deal with the unkind;
Without a doubt within, without,
Must conquer, singing, and move about
In a world where all men should be brothers,
Building up a Welcome for others!

Then let us all be glad and play,
And work and sing and live to-day!
Where we happen is just the place
Where God is Love and Christ is Grace!
The past we would not all forget;
The future will be better yet!
But in an endless, beginningless Now
We breathe God's Life, and are learning how
So to labor and love and learn
That the swift hours, which never return,
Into high secrets will receive us,
And wiser every moment leave us,
Till in that World where Angels beckon,
Where a Welcome waits us all, we waken.

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